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Title of Essay: Unknown Mutilation

Target audience: Future Parents

Sample Outline provided with the student's permission to be used in UCR's Golfito's Precinct.

I. Introduction

- A. Infant male circumcision is an ancient practice mainly performed because of religious beliefs as in Judaism and Islam.
- B. This procedure consists on removing the skin that protects the glans penis which is called prepuce.
- C. Nowadays, according to the World Health Organization (WHO), the countries in which this procedure prevails are the African and Asian ones (WHO, para.2-3).
- D. Moreover, 76% to 92% of the US's male population is circumcised (WHO, para.4), hence 56% of all male babies in the US were circumcised in 2005 (Chaya, para.3).
- E. Also, in the latest two centuries, it has been practiced for other reasons, besides religion, such as health, hygiene, and socio-cultural norms.
- F. Thesis statement: Although male circumcision has a positive effect on grownup male's health, it has physical and psychological effects on newborns, and at the same time it violates the baby's rights. In addition, it is considered a form of genital mutilation. Therefore, this practice should not be performed on newborns, and parents should let them decide whether or not they will get the surgery.

II. Counter argument & refutation

- A. As stated before, male circumcision has proved to be an effective procedure which provides many hygienic and health advantages.

- a. For example, circumcision may reduce the incidence of urinary tract infections, penile cancer, and sexually transmitted diseases; it would cause less penile inflammation and retractile disorders; and it would improve hygiene (Medical Benefits Fund, para.13-20).
- B. Some researchers think that the prepuce does not have any physiological function in the penis.
- C. However, this procedure, as any other surgical intervention, has physical and psychological implications for newborns during their childhood.

III. Pro argument 1

- i) As a surgical procedure, circumcision has physical as well as psychological consequences in the baby.
 - (1) The probability of developing big and painful scarred tissue is very high since it involves cutting off a reasonable amount of skin from the penis.
 - (a) According to Benly and Boyle, depending on the surgeon the patient may develop uneven scarred tissue that not only affects the aesthetics of the penis making it somehow *worse*, but it also can cause a lot of pain during an erection (Benly & Boyle, para.X).
 - (b) Another physical implication is that the procedure can cause bowing of the penis which, as stated in the medical-dictionary, is “A condition in which the head of the penis curves upward—dorsad—or downwards—ventrad—at the junction between the head and shaft of the penis; most cases are associated with hypospadias” (Segen's Medical Dictionary, 2011). In this case, it may happen because the surgeon made an uneven cut, so there is more skin from one side than from the other one; in many cases, the solution is to cut even more skin. In addition, if the surgeon cuts to much skin, the penis will not be able to fully erect itself causing a lot of pain.
 - (2) On the other hand, according to Boyle, a trauma can be defined as “an aggression, a sexual abuse, or torture that threatens the physical integrity of a person” (Boyle, para.X).
 - (a) If it is considered that years back newborns were believed to feel no pain, thus circumcisions were performed without anesthesia (citation), and the fact that it is considered a form of genital mutilation; it can be said that male circumcision can cause a long term trauma to newborns.

(b) For example, in a study of 546 man, 60% felt mutilated, 59% felt depressed, 52% felt resentment against their parents, 50% felt inferior than non circumcised man, 40% felt violated, and 30% felt betrayed by their own parents (Hammond, para.X).

IV. Pro argument 2

ii) Routine circumcision on newborns violates the human rights of the baby.

(a) Articles 24 and 27 from the Convention of the Rights of the child.

V. Pro argument 3

iii) Cutting off the prepuce can result in the loss of sensibility of the penis which prevents males fully achieving pleasure in the coitus.

(a) Understanding circumcision: a multi-disciplinary approach to a multi-dimensional problem

VI. Conclusion

A. Even though parents' beliefs and decisions have to be respected, they do not have the right to make their children undergo an unnecessary surgery such as routine circumcision.

B. Parents must understand that the foreskin is not a birth defect; it has a function and their sons are the only ones who have the right to decide if they want to get rid of such an important part of their body when they are adults.